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ABSTRACT

Detailed guidelines are provided for parent group trainers who conduct workshops on language and communication, pre-reading, and pre-writing for parents of young children. In addition, many handouts for parents are presented in the manual, including information on: ways to help infants, toddlers, and preschool children listen and talk, reading and writing readiness experiences, and alphabet games. Listed are several books for children and 100 things a child can read other than books and magazines. (RH)

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GETTING INVOLVED WORKSHOP GUIDE

YOUR CHILD AND

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LANGUAGE
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A Manual For The Parent Group Trainer

The Getting Involved Workshop Guides were prepared by staff of

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GETTING INVOLVED WORKSHOP GUIDE
YOUR CHILD & LANGUAGE, READING & WRITING

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TRAINER PREPARATION

1. **Review the Getting Involved Booklet entitled** *Your Child and Language; Your Child and Reading,* and *Your Child and Writing.* Pay special attention to "Points to Keep in Mind".
2. Read the "Key Points" in the Workshop Guide.
3. Read the "Statement of Objectives" and "Introduction to Participants".
4. Review the "Workshop Outline".
5. Read "Planning for the Workshop".
6. Select activities and discussions from the Guide to use in your workshop. For example, choose an ice breaker, choose some areas for discussion and appropriate handouts, select a hands-on activity, and some displays. Use the table of contents and summaries to facilitate your selection.
7. Familiarize yourself with your selections. If you are using the filmstrip, then preview it and anticipate related discussions. Prepare to lead the selected activities and discussions in your own way, and in your own words, to suit your particular audience.
8. Sequence your selections, using the "Workshop Outline" as a guide. Review the sequence to determine how to manage the transitions from one activity or discussion to the next. If the sequence does not seem to make a logical progression, try a new order or new selections.
9. Practice and time the Workshop by running through the sequence of activities and discussions. It is a good idea to summarize each activity and discussion as they are done in the workshop. Practice the transitions. Plan for breaks and refreshments.
10. Prepare and collect the materials you will need (eg. handouts, materials for hands-on, and ice-breaker activities, etc.).

PLANNING FOR THE WORKSHOP:

Use this list to help you organize the logistics of planning and giving the workshop.

1. How long will your workshop last?
2. What time of day or night will be best for giving your workshop?
3. Who is your audience? Who is your target group?
4. How many people can you accommodate? How many people do you think will attend?
5. Who will contact the participants? How will they be contacted? for example: parent newsletter, note to parent, personal contact, local newspaper, PTA announcement, fliers, posters, radio. . . . Be sure to include all relevant information. How will you know who will be attending? Who should interested parents call? Will they have to register?
6. What facility will you use? Be certain to arrange for a good facility that will provide enough room for participants. If you are serving refreshments be sure that it is permited in the facility. It is a good idea to check to make sure that the facility will be ready for you the day before the workshop.
7. Who will be responsible for transportation?
   Make sure that the person who is responsible for transportation duties is prepared. (eg. size of vehicle(s) is adequate, gas, map or route, times for pick up and drop off, names of people to transport etc.)
8. What refreshments will be served? Make sure that the person responsible for refreshments has addressed all areas (eg. number of participants, preparations for setting up and serving and clean up, nutritious foods, etc.)
9. Plan to arrive at the workshop site early enough to prepare your environment.
   a. set up the displays
   b. plan seating arrangement
   c. arrange materials for presentation
   d. assure that AV equipment is set up and ready to go
   e. have a sign-in sheet
   f. have name tags prepared
   g. have an agenda prepared
   h. have handouts in order
   i. have evaluation forms ready

SUGGESTED WORKSHOP OUTLINE –

This workshop is designed to take approximately 2 hours and 10 minutes for completion. However, the trainer may wish to cut down on parts of it, and cut other segments out altogether in order to better suit his parent group and/or time frame.

The following outline suggests an order of procedure (an agenda) for your workshop.

1. **Introduction - Statement of Objectives - Establishment of Definitions - 10 minutes.**
   Welcome the group and introduce yourself. Begin your workshop by reading or stating in your own words the Introduction. Review the Objectives by explaining to the participants what you hope they will learn from your workshop. Clarify any definitions if necessary. Pass out an agenda so that the participants know what to expect next.

2. **Ice Breakers - 15 minutes**
   Move on to your ice breaker by introducing it's purpose. By breaking the group into smaller groups you will facilitate interaction among participants. Be sure to summarize this activity after it is over in order to clearly tie in the experience with the objectives of your workshop. Participants should now have some recognition of their own attitudes toward the subject, as well as insight into how their children experience and learn.

3. **Lectures - Discussions - Activities - 20 minutes**
   For the body of the workshop, vary your delivery system using the techniques of lecturing briefly, drawing on participants' experiences by encouraging and soliciting discussions, and providing hands-on activities.

   Define the subject clearly, then ask for examples from participants. Tell how children develop skills in this area, then ask for illustrations from the participants' daily lives. Emphasize why skill development in this subject area is important. Having established a definition of the subject area, having explained how children learn skills in the subject area, having underlined the importance of acquiring such skills, you have paved the way for spending most of your efforts on helping parents see how important they are in teaching their children the subject - in discussing ways parents can help children learn these skills.

   Use your selection of lectures, discussions, activities, displays and handouts from this guide.

   Summarize the points you have made so far.

4. **Break for Refreshments - 15 minutes**
   You have spent considerable time getting the participants comfortable and getting them "into" the topic, so don't let the break and refreshment period become awkward. If the group does not feel comfortable enough to talk freely while eating, then you could structure this time also. Use the environmental displays to draw out conversation, or elicit conversation about the participants' children. Use the time to answer questions about your lectures or about the behavior of participants' children.

5. **Lectures - Discussions - Activities - 20 minutes**
   Continue on from #3. Summarize all key points.

6. **Filmstrip and Discussion of Filmstrip - 15 minutes**
   The filmstrip and Discussion of Filmstrip - 15 minutes

The filmstrip summarizes what the workshop should have established: definition of subject (what is math or what is play. . .), how children develop skills in the subject, why it is important, and how parents can help children learn. Reiterate the key points, alert participants to particular segments of the filmstrip which emphasize these points. The important message is that parents play a key role in their children developing skills.

7. **Review and Discuss Handouts - 10 minutes**
   Use the handouts to reinforce the parental role of helping children learn. Encourage parents to refer and use the handout information at home. Answer any questions.

8. **Review Getting Involved booklets - Give Closing Statements - 15 minutes**
   Pass out the *Getting Involved* booklets indicating that they are a valuable resource for participants as they contain the key points made in the workshop and will remind them of their important roles in their children's development. Use the sample closing statement to bring closure to your workshop.

9. **Evaluation Forms - 10 minutes**
   Pass out and request completion of the workshop evaluation forms. Thank each participant for attending.

KEY POINTS

1. Language is the instrument of thought, personal expression and social communication.
2. Children build the foundation for language from interaction with people who talk to them.
3. Language acquisition is a gradual process.
   a. First, children cry, coo and babble.
   b. Then they progress from one word to two or three words.
   c. Eventually, they combine words to form sentences.
4. Children learn to talk by talking. This is why they need opportunities to "play" with language.
5. Reading and writing are important communication skills related to language.
6. Language skills play a central role in school performance.
7. The effective use of language enables children to express thoughts, ideas and feelings, and provides strong self-concept.
8. Parents can use the home environment and day to day living situations to contribute to the acquisition of communication skills - listening, speaking, reading and writing.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

1. Provide a general overview of language acquisition and development.
2. Assist parents in realizing their role in the language development of the child.
3. Help parents see the relationship between oral language skills and language arts - reading, spelling, and writing.
4. Demonstrate both indirect and direct preparation for reading and writing.
5. Recognize that future school success depends on the child's ability to communicate by talking, listening, reading and writing.
6. Demonstrate that the ability to communicate thoughts, feelings and ideas contributes to the child's self-esteem.

INTRODUCTION TO PARTICIPANTS

Statement of Purpose:

The purpose of this workshop is to increase your understanding of language development, the importance of effective communication skills and the emergence of reading and writing skills in young children.

Brief Introduction:

As adults we have few memories regarding the *intense effort* that went into our *language learning process.*

Very early on children experiment and entertain themselves with language. The *"practice"* that they engage in plays a very *important role* in the language learning process. Young children are often observed purposefully practicing language when they are alone, perhaps in their cribs or playpens. When parents use language and converse with their children from the very beginning, they contribute to the child's fascination and desire to learn to talk.

This evening we will explore the importance of language skills and how we can enhance our children's abilities to speak, listen, read and write.

ICE BREAKER

Introduction to Ice Breaker:

Communication is the sharing of our thouhgts by words, letters, or messages. We communicate when we talk, make gestures, write or read. Often the skills around language, reading, and writing are taken for granted by adults. For instance, many of us have no clear recollection of how we felt when we were just beginning to learn to read. Most of us have even forgotten the time when we couldn't read at all. And so, we take a lot of things for granted. We make assumptions we should not make.

There is a way of going back, though – at least to the point where you can look at a page of type much the same way as a child looks at it before learning to read.

(To Trainer:

At this point provide each participant with the ice breaker handout sheet and procede with directions.)

Directions:

Take a look at the symbols that appear on the paper.

(To Trainer:

Seek comments or feelings about the symbol sentence from participants. Procede with the ice breaker activity. Break up into small groups or into pairs. Explain the activity to participants. Re-emphasize that they are putting themselves in the place of the child who is just beginning to learn to read. When everyone is finished you might take time to discuss the activity.)

Ice Breaker Conclusion:

This activity illustrates how very foreign written symbols (letters) can be to someone unfamiliar with what they look like and represent. Language, reading and writing are skills that unfold gradually for the child.

Throughout the workshop keep in mind some of your feelings about this activity, relating them to the new skills that children must conquer and the necessary help and encouragement we must offer to them.

LECTURES - DISCUSSIONS - ACTIVITIES

PART I

The Development of Language and Communication

To the Trainer:
At this point you will want to provide a brief overview of language development. Keep in mind that the information you share will be of a general nature. If it suits you, try to elicit some of the language stages of growth from the parents based upon their own experiences. As they share with you, their comments can be related to the outline overview. Provide participants with handouts and review.

Lecture Introduction:
For very young infants the first attempts at communicating will be *crying*. Even though the baby cries for little apparent reason at the very start, he soon learns to use this crying as his language. He uses it to communicate with the world around him.

The cries soon take on different qualities. The baby develops *a repertory of different cries which represent states of feelings*. For example, although he will cry for reasons of pain or discomfort, hunger, and fear, the type of cry is often distinguishable as it relates to one of these reasons.

In addition to making sounds the infant is a very adept *listener*. The interesting thing to note is that while the baby clearly hears all sorts of sounds around him, the ones he concentrates on the most are *the sounds of people talking*. It seems as though the young child has a natural interest in voices. This listening often happens without seeing the source of the sound. Gradually, *looking and listening* come together. From the very beginning of life crying and listening form the early stages of communication.

To the Trainer:
The following is a general communication stages overview. Use an easel or chalk board to record the group's thoughts concerning language development. If time permits this can become a small group exercise that encourages thinking and discussing the stages of communication. Try to relate their ideas to the overview.

COMMUNICATION OVERVIEW

I. **Babies**
   1. **Crying**
   2. **Comfort sounds** and **cooing**
   3. Private and **social babbling**
   4. Vocal play (often observed while children are alone)
   5. More **socialized vocalization**
   6. **Vocal play** using **inflections**

Babies enjoy the sound of their own voice. They will go on for countless moments just babbling and repeating pleasant sounds. The baby has associated the soothing

and gentle sounds of your voice with having his needs met, (like when you talk to him as you feed him). This is pleasurable for the baby. And since he can make vocal sounds similar to yours then he, too, is pleased by his own sounds. This begins the true joy of language.

(Pass out handout sheet entitled: Helping Babies to Listen & Talk)

II. **Toddlers**

1. Makes meaningful attempts at conversation.
2. Begins to use words meaningfully and understands new words at an increasing rate.
3. Uses label words (names for people, animals, and other things that are important to him).
4. Speech includes 10-20 words (although the toddler understands much more) at first.
5. By the middle to end of year two, word vocabulary is up to approximately 150 words.
6. Responds to simple directions.
7. Starts to use simple sentences.

For toddlers, understanding language is of far greater importance initially than actually speaking it. When the level of understanding increase, the toddler will increase his communication with you. The emergence of language moves the one to two and a half year old (toddler) out of the "baby" world and into the more sophisticated world where things can be "discussed" and talked about.

(Pass out handout sheet entitled: Helping Toddlers Listen and Talk)

III. **Pre-schoolers**

1. The pre-school child has much to say now so he uses words socially to tell you what he thinks.
2. Hearing and listening skills have matured to the point where he can repeat a four to five-word long sentence.
3. His language shows an increased understanding of words and what they mean. (For example, the child can identify objects, like "car," and activities, like "taking a bath," from looking at pictures.
4. Names familiar objects with ease.
5. He learns to use plurals. (There is one "cracker," now there are two "crackers.")
6. He learns words that show differences in size, like "big" and "little."

All the years of practice in making sounds now show their value. He is more easily understood. The sounds come forth more smoothly. He listens to the sound of his own voice and corrects himself. His sentences increase in complexity.

(Pass out handout sheets entitled: Helping Pre-schoolers Listen and Talk)

To the Trainer.

Summarize the **Development of Language and Communication** section of the workshop, referring to the following remarks and Environmental Display – **Language is Learned** – to help you. Keep in mind that, 1) parents may need help in determining what to expect from their child and 2) some children will not be ready for all steps of each activity and some parents may need to start with just one.

Few of the activities take any special time for the parent and were chosen as the usual times that parent and child are together. Help the parent to understand that the activity does not have to be perfect. The important part is that they are working with and talking to their child.

Remarks:

Some of the following suggestions should help make the activities go more smoothly: Have your child watch and listen. When you are talking to him, try to be at his eye level. Speak slowly and use short sentences.

When you ask your child a question, give him a choice of answers whenever possible. ("Would you like corn or peas?") Try to get him to say the word. If a word is poorly spoken or unclear, show your approval for the attempt to say the word and then repeat the word correctly. Children learn to speak by comparing their words with yours. Soon your child will repeat words to you and seek your approval because you have taught him. Understand what you expect him to do. These activities should be **fun** and not upsetting for either you or your child.

Learning how to talk takes a long time. Do not set time limits for yourself or your child. Remember that children develop at different rates. Take every chance to enjoy your child as he is.

PART II

Pre-Reading and Pre-Writing

To the Trainer:

It is important to convey to parents that reading and writing skills develop as early as when the child picks up a block and places it in a container. Every time a child builds, sorts, strings beads, matches colors or pictures, draws, scribbles, paints, pours, etc. he is on his way in learning to read and write.

Introductory Activity:

Start this section by asking participants to think about and share all of the small "steps" involved in writing and reading (eg. using hand, eyes; looking from left to right, etc.).

To the Trainer:

Upon completion of the above "introductory activity" begin a brief overview of the **Indirect** and **Direct** Preparation for reading and writing. Review and refer to the following outline. There are several examples given of children's play materials in the outline.

Hands-on Activity:

An **activity suggestion** is to gather some or all of the materials (bead stringing, color or picture lotto matching, puzzles, legos, pegs and pegboards, sandpaper letters, pencils, tracing templates, color sorting games, paper - paste, books, etc.) and put several on each table: ask participants to break up into groups at each table to:

- play with the material(s)
- decide how the material(s) helps children learn to read and write (either directly or indirectly)
- share their input

As the trainer you will want to prepare yourself with some explanation and rationale for why each material is a good readiness activity for reading and writing.

Overview (Outline):

A. **Pre-Reading**

Indirect Preparation:

- encourage concentration and independence
- develop the eyes through:
  - pouring exercise
  - stringing (beads, macaroni, etc.)
  - using eye droppers, basters, tweezers and tongs to transfer things from one bowl to another (always going from left to right)
- develop a sense of left-to-right movement:
  - scooping and pouring activities
  - back and forth motion of **scrubbing** with a scrub brush
- develop visual perception
  - puzzles
  - pegs and pegboard
  - parquetry games
  - matching games (letter matching)

These materials help children make judgements and comparisons.

Direct Preparation

- picture matching
- shape matching
- cards with child's name on it
- picture cards for vocabulary building
- "reading" books - recognizing familiar words
- experience charts - writing down the child's statement(s) and reading back to him
- letters made of sandpaper
- cut-out letters

B. **Pre-Writing**

Indirect Preparation

- bead stringing
- pouring and spooning
- playing with blocks and puzzles
- pegboards

Activities like these help develop coordination and muscle control. The more objects and toys a child manipulates the better he is at developing this control. The child also develops eye-hand coordination. Also, these activities develop **lightness of touch,** downward stroke and left-to-right movement.

Direct Preparation

- Refine muscle control:
  - through the development of scissor and pencil use
  - cutting and pasting
  - tracing, copying, drawing, painting
- Develop some letter recognition:
  - sandpaper letters
  - movable alphabet/letters for forming words
  - experience charts (see "Pre-reading")

To the Trainer:

Summary:

Select handouts to share with participants. Review with them, making suggestions or answering questions. The handouts include activities that promote reading and writing skills.

Either before or after the **Handout distribution** you may want to show the **Filmstrip** on Language - Reading - Writing. Allow time for questions and comments.

At the conclusion of the workshop distribute and review the "Getting Involved" booklets:

- Your Child and Language
- Your Child and Reading
- Your Child and Writing

Review the sample closing and make summarizing remarks.

SAMPLE CLOSING

Talking, reading and writing are the main ways of communicating with others. The earlier we expose children to language, the more likely they will be to enjoy it and learn to value and use it. As adults we play an integral part in the development of children's communication skills. When we speak to and converse with children, we help them build the foundation for language.

Words are symbols that consist of sounds created by the vocal cords. So, too, letters and numerals are symbols that represent meaning. You can help children learn written symbols or, at least, appreciate them as a means of communication.

Language and communication skills help children put their feelings into words. It enables them to think through problems and arrive at solutions. Be patient, don't push. Be supportive and remember that the most important aspect of any learning situation between you and your child is the love and understanding, encouragement, and acceptance of their mistakes, that you give to them.

WORKSHOP EVALUATION FORM

_____ _____ Workshop

Trainer: _____ Date_____

Name _____

1. The workshop information was: (check as many boxes as you wish)

____ new	____ repetitive
____ enjoyable	____ not enjoyable
____ clear	____ confusing
____ useful	____ useless
____ too short	____ too long
____ just what I need	

2. The most enjoyable part of the workshop was:

3. The least enjoyable part of the workshop was:

4. If you were to add something to this workshop what would it be?

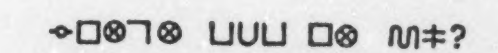
5. If you were to leave out a part of this workshop what would it be?

6. Would you like another workshop in this area? ____ yes ____ no

7. Overall this workshop was:
____ poor ____ fair ____ good ____ very good ____ excellent

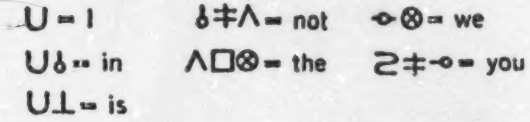
ICE BREAKER: PRE-PRIMER FOR PARENTS

Below is a simple sentence. You will probably react to the sentence the way a child would react to his first reading material. Here is the sentence.:



(Where did he go?)

So that you can almost literally go back to school and put yourself in the place of the child who is just beginning to learn to read, we have made a special preprimer for you. The preprimer contains seven of the high-frequency words that are sometimes taught during the pre-reading period. They account for nearly one-third of all the words in this story and are as follows:



Turn to the picture stories on the other side and give them a try. Try writing your own sentence below and share it with someone.

Source: Houghton Mifflin

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Source: Houghton Mifflin

HELPING BABIES TO LISTEN & TALK

1. Try to direct your words right to the baby.
2. Find times when you can talk to the baby alone.
3. Use labeling words often. (Instead of saying, "Go get it." you might say, "Go get the **ball**.")
4. Use the baby's name often, too.
5. Help the baby make a connection between objects and words. Talk about things that are physically present to help the baby make this connection.
6. Be expressive.
7. Use gestures.
8. Respond to your baby's sounds and gestures.
9. Babies use words of their own. Do not try and correct. Now is the time to accept whatever sounds he makes. There will be plenty of other opportunities for using "correct" words. So, acknowledge what he says.

As we said before, the child's early speech is motivated by the affection and pleasure associated with it.

Helping Toddlers To Listen & Talk

1. Talk often and directly to your child.
2. Match what you do to what you say (For instance, "Let's take off your shoes" - as you remove them; "Now, let's take off your socks.
3. Give the child a chance to respond and be sure to respond to him. This will help your child know that talking is communicating.
4. Speak in short sentences when giving directions.
5. Read stories to your child. Ask questions about things in the story. Have him listen for particular sounds in the story and repeat them back to you.

Helping Pre-schoolers To Listen & Talk

Many of the language stimulation ideas for babies and toddlers apply to pre-schoolers as well. Expand those ideas and try some of these activities.

Suggestions for Helping your Child at Home

Some things to think about before you begin:

Get in a comfortable position so that you can look into each other's faces when speaking.

Get your child's attention and have him look at you before you begin the activity. You may need to gently touch your child's chin or lower cheek to get the attention needed.

Use a **quiet, pleasant speaking voice** and make sure the room you are in is quiet. Turn off the T.V. so you and your child can pay full attention to the activity.

The activity should last **as long as your child stays interested. YOU** may not be interested in the activity, but **YOU ARE** interested in helping your child to speak. Plan as many activities throughout the day as you can. Take time, your child may tell you a lot of things he wants you to know.

Always use short sentences. Encourage your child to repeat what you have said.

When your child speaks during the games you play, praise him by giving hugs, kisses, smiles, or telling him how pleased you are. Let your child know by your actions that you approve.

Try to do each activity every day because children learn by repeating.

ACTIVITIES:

WHEN YOUR CHILD IS DRESSING:

1. Name the parts of the body and the clothing he is putting on them. Example: "This is your foot. Put your sock on your foot. These are your legs. Your pants go on your legs."
2. When your child can repeat the names of his body parts and clothing, ask him to show you his arm, his shoe, etc. After your child points, you use the word in a sentence. Example: "Show me your arm." Child points. You say "Yes, that is your arm."
3. When your child can do this, have him answer your question, "What is this?" Repeat the word using a sentence. Example: "What is this?" Child says, "Shirt," you say "Yes, that is your green shirt."

WHEN YOUR CHILD IS EATING:

1. Name the foods and utensils (silverware, dishes, cups, etc.). Example: "This is a glass. We put milk in a glass."
2. When your child can repeat the names of food and utensils, ask him to show you the plate, milk, etc. After your child points, use the word in a sentence and have your child repeat it. Example: "Show me a plate." Child points. You say, "Yes, that is a plate. Put some beans on the plate."
3. When your child can do this have him answer the question "What is this?" as you point to foods and utensils. Repeat the word using a sentence. Example: "What is this? Yet, this is a knife. We cut food with a knife."

WHEN YOUR CHILD COMES HOME FROM SCHOOL:

1. Encourage your child to tell you about his day by asking questions. Example: "What did you do today at school?" or "Who did you play with?" or "Tell me about lunch."
2. If your child answers with one word, you repeat the word in a sentence. Example: "What did you do in school today?" Child says, "Play." You say, "You played in school. What did you play with?"
3. If your child brings home a picture, say "Tell me about it."

WHEN YOUR CHILD IS PLAYING WITH TOYS:

1. Talk about what your child is doing.
2. Ask him simple questions about what he is doing.
3. If your child responds with one word, repeat the word in a sentence. Example: "Where is the car? Oh yes, there is your blue car. Where are you going in the car? You are driving to the store. Here comes the car. Make the car stop."

TALK TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES:

Talk out loud about what you are hearing, seeing, doing, or feeling. Your child needs to hear about what happens every day. Do this when you are cooking supper, waiting for the bus, at the supermarket, at the doctor's office, etc. Example: "I am making spaghetti for supper, first I put water in the pot and put it on the burner to heat. When the water boils, I will put in the spaghetti. See the steam as the water gets hot. You may help me put the spaghetti in the pot. Be careful, the pot is hot. I will set the timer so we will know when the spaghetti is done. Do you hear the timer tick?"

STORY BOOKS AND MAGAZINES:

1. Point to pictures and tell your child what you see. Have him repeat the word. Example: "See the mother holding the baby. Can you say baby? The baby is little. Show me the baby's hair."
2. Try to have your child talk about the pictures using single words and short sentences.

YOUR OWN ACTIVITY:

1. You think of an activity that you and your child would enjoy doing and talking about.
2. Add your idea to the above activities, and do this activity as often as you can.

Remember: Children learn language by **hearing** and **using** it often. In order to talk with other people, children must learn to speak clearly and be able to express their ideas and thoughts. The above suggestions are some ways to help **you** to develop language skills with **your child.**

Source: Unknown

ENVIRONMENTAL DISPLAY AND/OR HANDOUT:

Language is learned.

Your child learns language from you, his parents. You provide the model, and the desire to speak and communicate. In conclusion, it would be well to repeat here some basic facts about learning to speak:

- Language is learned.
- It comes from interaction with **people**.
- It come from your child's **experiences.**
- Language is **listening** and **understanding** as well as speaking.
- Your child will make many sounds before he says actual words.
- Your child must **need and want** to speak.
- You should **reward** all his attempts at speech.
- Language is **developmental** - it grows with the child.
- Language stimulation should take place in **natural situations.** It should not be forced.
- It may take your child a long time to say what he wants or means. Don't rush him. Listen patiently.
- Don't anticipate what he is going to say. If he always gets what he wants before he asks for it, he will not need to talk.
- Always use concrete examples when possible. It is much better to show him an apple and say "apple", than to show a picture of one.

Source: Unknown

READINESS EXPERIENCES

Pre-Reading Activities

Learning about letters and words:

1. Many adults believe that it is important for children to learn early to recognize and name letters of the alphabet. They drill children in this skill. Actually, learning the ABC's is just a small part of learning about reading. Children will learn to name the letters of the alphabet without adults forcing and rushing them to do so. Parents can help their children learn the names in a number of ways. They can read to their children, and point out and help them read words around them. They can give them crayons or pencils and paper for writing practice. They can provide toy alphabet letters for their children to play with. Such activities will teach children a great deal about the reading process in an enjoyable way.
2. Children can learn a lot about reading by writing. Many preschool and school-age children like to make up stories about the pictures they draw. You can write down what they say about their pictures. If it is brief and you print big enough, your child may want to try and trace over the words that you wrote with a bolder or darker flair pen.
3. Ask your child to tell you a story or write down what he or she says and read it together. Let your child make pictures about the story.
4. Words are everywhere. Help your children learn how to say them and what they mean. Make use of everyday activities:

   Words are everywhere, not just in books. They are on the milk carton and the cereal box. They are on billboards and on the mailbox. They are on toys. Even the boxes that toys come in have words printed on them.

   Children like to try to read words around them, and aren't afraid to guess at their meanings. For example, a child may point to the word stamped on an orange and say "orange," when the word really is "Sunkist." The child's guess, though incorrect, makes sense and shows that the child knows what reading is all about. Praise your children for making guesses about the words they see. Children learn to read by trying to read, and by using everything they know to figure out what words say.

   There are many ways you can help children learn about reading, using words that you encounter every day.

   When walking or riding down the street, point to words on traffic signs. ("We have to stop here because that sign says 'Stop' ".)

   When shopping at the grocery store, ask your child to find things for you. When the child brings the box or can to you, point to the name printed on the container and read it. ("Thank you for getting the bread. See? It says 'Bread' right here.")

   When you get home from the store, have your child help you put things away. Occasionally point to an obvious word on a label and ask, "What do you think this word is?"

Pre-Writing Activities

Sort things: clothing, silverware, playing cards, buttons, coins, nails, or screws, pictures, colored cubes or cardboard squares, pieces of cloth, animal cutouts, lids, crayons.

String things: macaroni, buttons, straws cut into small pieces, beads, cheerios, pieces of cardboard with holes, styrofoam circles, plastic lids.

Pour things: rice, sand, dirt, juice, milk, water.

Color things: paper, newspaper, cardboard, coloring books, comic strips, old cards.

Cut things: paper, newspaper, cardboard, magazine pictures, ribbon scraps, cloth if possible, coloring book figures.

Paste things: what the child has cut out, pictures of animals, calendar pictures, magazine clippings, newspaper pictures, photographs in an album, letter to grandparents, collages of anything, weed pictures, macaroni, seed designs.

Trace things: hands, feet, shapes, blocks, cookie cutters, lids, coloring book pictures, cardboard cutout, small toys.

Listen to things: stories, records, radio conversations, songs, musical instruments, birds, people on the street.

Read things: nursery rhymes, stories, comics, letters from relatives, signs, food labels on boxes and cans, magazine titles, the calendar, names of books, names of people, own name.

Talk about things: the weather, clouds, seasons, animals, birds, people, objects and their uses (tools of the kitchen, the garage, the bathroom), a child's activities, trips, experiences as a baby, parents' work.

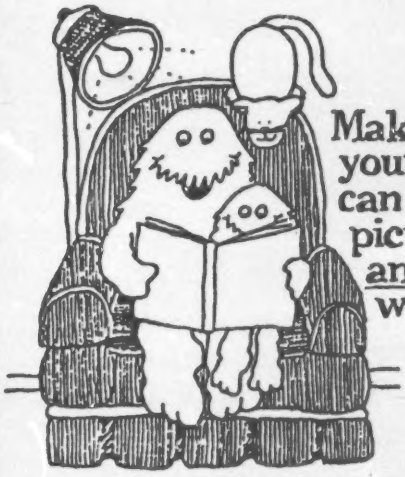
Source: Unknown

READING ALOUD TO YOUNG CHILDREN

Some hints from
Childrens Choice Book Club®

Pick a regular time for reading every day.

Find a place that's quiet and cozy.



Make sure your child can see the pictures and words.

Read with expression, but not too dramatically.

Have fun reading to your child!

HANDOUT

Source: Scholastic Magazines, Inc. 1979

MAKING FRIENDS WITH BOOKS

Nancy K. Long

Games You and Your Child Can Play

(Taken from *Making Friends With Books,*
M. Botel & J. Seaver, Curriculum Associates)

I. Games to Arouse Interest

A. **How Close Can We Come to Guessing What Will Happen? (predicting)**

In this game, you use the book's title and pictures as clues. You read aloud the title, then you and your child talk about what you see in the pictures. Then you both try to guess what will happen. You say, "How close can we come to guessing what will happen?" Try to make several guesses. After you've read the book, the two of you decide which of your guesses were closest. You might also talk about how some of your guesses were different from the story and why.

B. **This Book Makes Me Think of. . . (associating)**

As in the previous game, you use the book's title and pictures as a starting point. But, in this game, you take turns letting your minds fly as you very freely say all the things that the title and pictures make you think of. It doesn't matter whether or not your thoughts are close to what the story is really about.

II. Games to Join In

A. **Echo Reading**

You say, "I'll read a bit (a phrase or a sentence) and you say it back to me like an echo." You can do the whole story this way.

III. Games to Start Discussion

A. **Retelling**

You might say to your child: "Let's try to retell the story in our own words. We'll use the pictures as clues." (This is a good way to go back over a story to review it and enjoy it again. Give help when needed.)

B. **The Book Reporters: The Game of Five Questions**

Pretend you are two TV or newspaper reporters telling or writing a newspaper article about the story. Together think of answers to these questions:

Who was in the book? (the characters)
Where/When did the story happen? (the setting)
What happened? (the plot)
Why did that happen? (meaning)

C. **Looking at the Pictures**

There is a lot you can do with pictures in a book to develop a child's language. One project, **The Mother-Child Home Program** in Freeport, New York, reported that children's scores on I.Q. tests were raised when mothers talked with their very young children about the pictures in books. You will find below our adaptation of the advice they gave to parents.

When looking at the pictures in a book, ask these kinds of questions, or

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give this sort of information, if your child doesn't know.

"What is this called?" (name)
"How many ____ do you see?" (number)
"What color is the ____?" (color)
"What size is the ____?" (size)
"What shape is the ____?" (shape)
"Where is the ____?" (under, on, next to, etc.)
"What makes the ____ do that?" (cause and effect)
"This is a shovel and that's a hoe. They are garden tools. Can you think of another garden tool?" (categories)

D. **Imagining Illustrations**

Books are usually full of illustrations, but there are some situations or ideas that aren't pictured. For example, you might say after you read The Three Billy Goats Gruff, "Suppose that, after the biggest Billy Goat kicked the troll off the bridge, he made a new home far away. What would the troll's house look like? Can you tell me how you would make a picture showing the troll's new home? What would it be made of? What kind of furniture would it have?"

While some children feel they "can't draw," they are often ready to tell you in elaborate terms what they would draw if they were an illustrator. Not having to do it, many children will enjoy describing a big picture full of details, and using lots of language to fill you in.

A FEW TITLES AMONG THOUSANDS

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

Alexander	Maybe a Monster
Adams	The Tiger Voyage
Bate	Little Rabbit's Loose Tooth
Bemelmans	Madeline
Berenstain	Bears on Wheels
Briggs	The Mother Goose Treasury
Brown	Goodnight Moon
Burton	Mike Mulligan and the Steam Shovel
Carle	A Very Hungry Caterpillar
DePaulo	Charlie Needs a Cloak
deRegniers	May I Bring a Friend?
Duvoisin	The House of Four Seasons
Eastman	Are you My Mother?
Freeman	Corduroy
Gaeddert	Noisy Nancy Norris
Gag	Millions of Cats, ABC Bunny
Geisel	The Cat in the Hat
Galdone	Little Red Riding Hood
Guilfoile	Nobody Listens to Andrew
Hoban	Bedtime for Frances
Hoff	Grizzwold
Keats	The Snowy Day, Skates
Kraus	Noel the Coward
Lenski	The Little Farm
Lionni	Frederick, Inch by Inch
Mayer	There's a Nightmare in My Closet
McCloskey	Make Way for Ducklings
Munari	Bruno Munari's Zoo
Mother Goose	The Brother Goose Book
Milne	Winnie the Pooh
Minarik	Little Bear Books
Potter	The Tale of Peter Rabbit
Peet	Chester the Worldly Pig
Piper	The Little Engine that Could
Reiss	Colors
Rey	Curious George
Sendak	Where the Wild Things Are
Slobodkina	Caps for Sale
Sharmat	Burton and Dudley
Thomas	"Stand Back," said the Elephant – "I'm Going to Sneeze."
Tresselt	The Mitten
Wildsmith	The Lazy Bear
Wright	The Real Mother Goose
Williams	The Big Golden Animal ABC
Zion	The Plant Sitter
Zaffo	Big Book of Real Fire Engines

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GETTING READY TO READ

The child's success in reading will depend to a significant degree on his home experiences during the pre-school years.

If your child has developed a sense of language in his early years - starting well before his first birthday - through sensing the rhythm and fun of words and sounds, his chances of reading success in school will be greatly increased.

The child who enjoys regular exposure to bedtime songs, rocking songs, counting-out rhymes, alphabet rhymes, nonsense verses, poems and stories - is growing up with words, learning about the world around him and how to express his feelings and observations about it.

When your child hears you talk, when he goes through the everyday routines of dressing, feeding, rocking, and playing - long before he understands the words connected with these actions - he is learning about language.

By the time he starts learning to read, he will have to employ the language skills of seeing, listening, talking, writing, and thinking. His pre-school years can be filled with activities in which he can practice these skills and thus find pleasure in the process of learning.

The Big Plus: A Parent's Attitude

A child takes along with him to school the six years or so of living he has spent with his family. His teachers will find him most ready to learn when attitudes such as these have been instilled in him from early family influences:

Reading's Like Breathing

The child who has an adult model he looks to - one who finds obvious pleasure in books and reading - sees reading as a way of life. The child takes to words and language as naturally as he takes to breathing when he is surrounded by books, newspapers and magazines in his early years and lives with people who enjoy them.

Books Are Special

To the child who comes to love books, reading has not been thrust upon him as "educational": books have not been chosen because they are "good for him": he does not feel threatened in his attempts to use and play with words. To him reading and listening to stories mean relaxation, good times together with people, or enjoyment of fantasy.

Words are Fun

Whether it's "patty cake" or "one, two, buckle my shoe" or "Yertle the Turtle," experimenting with the sounds of language, playing with words, and telling favorite stories promote in the child the beginnings of the love for learning, the spirit of exploration, and a healthy curiosity - characteristics that count toward success in school.

From Airports to Zoos

The child who has seen and touched a calf, ridden a plane, watched a parade, and gone to a circus has begun to collect experiences, not the tedious exercise that some children find it to be as they enter school.

Read Me a Story

Quiet time means storytime to the parent and child who feel comfortable with reading, talking and listening together. And it also means a time free of tension and

pressure. The literature of the nursery, rich in humor, nonsense, rhythm, surprise and wonder, presents unlimited opportunities to the parent who truly wants to give to his child the gift of delight in reading.

Reading is Fun - Books are Fun

Here are some hints for making reading and books important to the life of your child:

•Give your child books as gifts on special occasions. Put book titles on gift lists for relatives.

•Arrange a place for reading and picture-looking in a place away from TV and other distractions.

•Provide a special shelf, drawer, or cabinet for your child's own books and records.

Make the public library a familiar and regular place to visit and relax with books.

•Subscribe to a good children's magazine.

•Pack a few books in the car at vacation time; save a new book to read while on a trip.

•Select some books according to interests and areas of curiosity (for example, auto racing, animals, airplanes).

ENCOURAGING WORDS FOR PARENTS

"When I was a boy of 14, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have him around. But when I got to be 21, I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in 7 years."
Mark Twain

Try These Activities With Your Child

•Ask your child to "read" a familiar book to you. He will remember some of the words from having heard the story many times; the others he will make up as he goes.

•Memorize a few short poems just because they're fun to say together with your child.

•Have fun with sounds. Play a game which you ask your child to name "all the things you can take to Pittsburgh" (a pear, a pie, a piano, a paper, etc.), or "all the things you can take to Philadelphia" (a file, a feather, a pheasant, a friend).

•Tell your child stories about happenings from your own childhood (like the time your father took you fishing and your shoes fell overboard into the lake).

•Give your child two containers - help him learn to discriminate size by putting large pebbles (or blocks, or other items) in one, small ones in another.

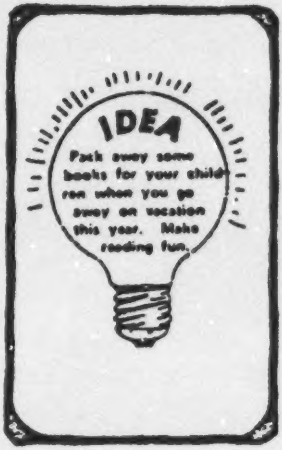
"A house without books is like a room without windows."
Horace Mann

•Sing simple songs together, such as the alphabet song, or Twinkle Twinkle Little Star."

•Invent games that involve classifying, counting, and identifying objects. Use kitchen utensils, crayons, playing cards.

•Imitate sounds or mimic repetitive catchphrases from familiar stories; weave them into conversations with your child.

•When your child relates an experience or a fantasy, write it down just as he tells it for other members of the family to read later. Let him take pride in keeping the stories he wrote.



Parents can:

•Lead their child to see that school attendance is important and desirable and that other matters should not have priority over attending school.

•Provide regular physical examinations to discover health problems which may interfere with a top performance in school.

•Be realistic in setting goals for their child - goals which he can achieve.

•Show interest in what he is doing in school and try to suggest home and community sources of help and interest but refrain from doing the child's homework for him.

•Make sure some part of the home and the same part of every day is set aside for study.

"The key to a child's success in reading is less in the grade than in his total life experience with his parents in the early years before three."

Earl S. Schaefer,
child development authority

Source:
Allentown Education Association
112 Madison Street
Allentown, PA 18102

100 Things a Child Can Read Other Than Books and Magazines*

1. baseball cards
2. cereal boxes - other boxes
3. songs and songsheets
4. signs
5. brochures
6. posters
7. bulletin boards
8. recipes
9. comic strips
10. pumpkin carols
11. cue cards
12. tags
13. newspapers
14. TV Guide
15. instructions for games
16. letters and notes
17. directions for building models
18. experience charts
19. graffiti
20. gasoline pump
21. dashboard
22. license plates
23. food labels
24. billboards
25. menus
26. want ads
27. catalog
28. record-cassette labels
29. clocks
30. thermometers
31. marquee
32. rebus stories
33. graphs
34. card games
35. crossword puzzles
36. maps
37. fortune cookies
38. t-shirts
39. bumper stickers
40. word search puzzles
41. aisle markers
42. money
43. stamps
44. ads on TV
45. bills-mail
46. Electric Co.
47. coupon
48. charge card-Social Security card
49. Driver's license; driver's manual
50. view master
51. grocery list
52. clues
53. matchcovers
54. shoe boxes
55. sugar packets
56. chalkboards
57. toothpaste
58. medicine bottles
59. pencils and pens
60. phone books
61. report cards
62. notebook covers
63. place mats
64. greeting cards
65. postcards
66. gum wrappers
67. paint cans
68. garden supply containers
69. candy wrappers
70. bubble gum comics
71. toy labels, wacky packages
72. cancelled checks, deposit slips
73. "wanted" posters
74. wallpaper
75. dishes, glasses
76. tickets
77. movies and subtitles
78. parking meter
79. tattoos
80. scoreboards
81. program books
82. tombstones
83. horoscopes
84. road markers & historical signs
85. card catalog
86. readers' guide
87. labels at museums, zoos, statues
88. vending machines
89. birthday cakes
90. fuses
91. patches
92. book lists
93. door signs
94. engravings
95. telephone
96. shelf paper & shower curtain
97. rulers
98. calculators
99. roads
100. legal documents (contracts)

*Developed by Christopher Newport College Reading Education students under the direction of Dr. Lora Friedman.

HANDOUT

ALPHABET GAMES

The Alphabet

Knowing the letters of the alphabet is one of the first steps in learning to read. Studies have established that the ability to name the letters of the alphabet is one of the best predictors of a child's success in beginning reading. Here are some activities you and your child can do together.

NEWSPAPER FUN

When reading the newspaper, ask your child to join you and identify some of the letter names in the headlines. Older children can identify familiar words.

FIND A LETTER

Print a capital or small letter in the center of a fairly large piece of cardboard. Ask your child to find letters in magazines or newspapers that are the same as the center one. Paste them on the cardboard around the letter. Your child will begin to see that the same letter can look very different, depending on where and how it is printed.

CONCENTRATION

Make two sets of alphabet cards using 3″ × 5″ index cards, using the blank side. Place 12 cards of the same letters from each set face down on a table. Mix them up. One person turns over two cards at a time. If they are the same letter, he takes the pair. If not, both cards are turned over again and another player tries to make a match. The player with the most pairs wins.

Variation:
By making one set of capital letter cards and another of small letters, the same activity can be used for matching capital and small letters.

Children need practice in learning the sounds that letters make. Consonants are some of these sounds. The consonants are: b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, w, x, y, z. Initial consonants are found at the beginning of words. The initial consonant in the word table is the letter t.

INITIAL CONSONANT ACTIVITIES

Shake the Marble
With a felt pen, print a consonant in each egg cup of an egg carton. Place a marble in the box and close it. Have your child shake the box, then open it. Where the marble landed, he must name that consonant and think of a word that begins with it.

Clip the Sound
Paste four to six pictures of things that begin with initial consonants sounds on a square or round piece of cardboard. Write each of these consonants on a gripper clothespin. Have your child clip a clothespin to its correct picture. Put the answer on back so she can check herself.

At the Restaurant
Draw capital and small letters on slips of paper with a felt pen. Use letters that begin with foods children would associate with eating at a restaurant – c for cake; b for butter, bread; h for hotdog; s, salad, and so on. Hold up the letter. See how many food items they can order that begin with the letter. Score a point for each correct answer.

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Consonant Pick

Paste or draw a picture of one item on a 4″ × 6″ index card. Punch 3 holes at one end of the card and label each hole with a consonant letter, one of which is the correct beginning sound of the picture. On the back of the card, mark the letter next to the correct hole only. Give your child a pencil to insert in the hole next to the correct initial consonant. She can then self-correct by checking the back of the card.

Egg Timer

Using an hour-glass sand-type egg timer, have the child say as many words as possible that begin with a certain sound by the time the sand goes down! Record the words as they are said. Then show the child each word. Help him see that the word does actually have that letter in the initial position.

Zany Zoo

Have the child name an animal. (Tiger) Now he must say what the animal eats (tissues) and where the animal lives (tent). These answers must begin with the same letter of the animal's name. (The tiger eats tissues in the tent.) Nonsense answers are OK as long as words begin with the same letter.

THE BEST OF BES
MADE BY TEACHERS
COMPILED BY SEDL, AUSTIN, TX.
FUNDED BY ACYF, WASHINGTON, DC